

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

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AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

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AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: ELAB, SGEN, EEC

SUBJ: ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING IN BRUSSELS

REF: (A) EC BRUSSELS 5318

(B) ROME 9950

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BEGIN SUMMARY. MEETING OF EUROPEAN TRADE UNION CONFEDERATION (ETUC) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE IN BRUSSELS SEPTEMBER 28 WILL CONSIDER FUTURE RELATIONS OF ETUC WITH CHRISTIAN TRADE UNION ORGANIZATION, WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (WCL). ALSO ON THE AGENDA IS ETUC RESPONSE TO LETTER FROM ITALIAN COMMUNIST FEDERATION CGIL PROPOSING FORMAL "EXCHANGE OF IDEAS" AND A REQUEST FROM BRUSSELS CONTACT OFFICE OF CGIL AND FRENCH COMMUNIST CGT FOR JOINT DISCUSSION OF EC SOCIAL ACTION PROGRAM. OTHER AGENDA ITEMS INCLUDE ETUC RELATIONSHIP TO THE INTERNATIONAL TRADE SECRETARIEATS (ITS)S), APPLICATION FROM MALTESE GENERAL WORKERS UNION FOR AFFILIATION, EC SOCIAL POLICY, AND QUESTION OF YOUTH ORGANIZATION AND CONSUMER ORGANIZATION. ACCORDING TO DANISH LO SOURCE, QUESTION OF RELATIONS TO WCL STILL CONTAINS MANY UNSETTLED PROBLEMS, SOME OF WHICH MIGHT BE RESOLVED AT CONCURRENT WCL CONGRESS AT EVIAN. END SUMMARY.

1. LO INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY PEER CARLSEN REVIEWED FOR LABATT NEGOTIATIONS THUS FAR BETWEEN ETUC AND WCL, IN RATHER MORE PESSIMISTIC TERMS THAN THOSE OF WCL GENERAL SECRETARY JEAN KULAKOWSKI (REFTEL A). CARLSEN IS CONVINCED THAT EO/WCL WOULD AGREE TO ETUC INSISTENCE THAT AFFILIATION OF WCL MEMBER UNIONS BE ON INDIVIDUAL BASIS, BUT HE SAID EO/WCL WAS STILL HOLDING OUT FOR ITS RIGHT TO NEGOTIATE AS A BLOC THE TERMS OF ITS MEMBERS' AFFILIATION. STICKY QUESTION WAS, THEREFORE, FOR WHOM THE EO/WCL WOULD BE NEGOTIATING. ADMISSION BY EO/WCL THAT IT HAD NO AFFILIATES IN GERMANY HAD EASED THE FEARS OF THE GERMAN DGB, BUT QUESTION OF WCL AFFILIATES IN CYPRUS AND SPAIN, QUESTION OF ACLI IN ITALY (WHICH IS NOT A TRADE UNION) AND DIVISION IN FRANCE BETWEEN THE CFTC AND THE CFDT WERE ALL UNSOLVED PROBLEMS.

2. RE SEVERAL CONDITIONS RAISED BY EO/WCL:
(A) ITS WISH FOR ASSURANCE OF ONA ETUC-VICE PRESIDENCY HAD BEEN FLATLY REJECTED,
(B) ITS REQUEST THAT KULAKOWSKI BE EMPLOYED AS A SECOND DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY IN ETUC HAD BEEN TURNED DOWN, AS THE TWO SECRETARIAT POSTS HAD BEEN ESTABLISHED IN CONFIDENTIAL

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DELICATE COMPROMISE BETWEEN EFTA AND EC TRADE UNION ORGANIZATIONS, AND
(C) ITS REQUEST THAT WCL GENERAL SECRETARY HAVE RIGHT, SIMILAR TO THAT OF ICFTU GENERAL SECRETARY, TO ATTEND ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETINGS WAS "INCONCEIVABLE."

3. CARLSON COMMENTED THAT LAST CONDITION WAS KEY TO THE REAL PROBLEM, THE FUTURE ROLE OF THE WCL AFTER ITS CORE

HAD BEEN ABSORBED INTO ETUC. SOME, FOR EXAMPLE THE BRITISH, PREFER TO AVOID THIS QUESTION BUT CARLSEN INTENDS TO PUSH STRONGLY FOR A DIRECT CONFRONTATION ON THE ISSUE, SINCE PRESENT MOMENT WAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO GET RID OF WCL ENTIRELY, BU ABSORBING IT. UNLESS, IN CARLSEN'S VIEW, THIS QUESTION WAS DEFINITELY SETTLED IT WOULD ALWAYS BE POSSIBLE FOR WCL TO REAPPEAR INSOME OTHER FORM. THE WCL'S EVIAN CONGRESS, CARLSEN THOUGHT, WOULD HAVE TO FACTE THE QUESTION OF ITS FUTURE ROLE AND HE WAS AFRAID THE INTENTION TO ELECT PEPIN AS PRESIDENT INDICATED THAT IT HOPED TO REMAIN ALIVE. TO REPORTING OFFICER'S QUESTION WHETHER THE TRADITIONAL ANTAGONISM BETWEEN ORIT AND CLASC IN LATIN AMERICA WOULD NOT PRECLUDE A TOTAL DEMISE OF THE WCL, CARLSEN REPLIED THAT THIS MIGHT BE FINESSED BY FORMATION OF A LATIN AMERICAN LABOR CONFEDERATION. SUCH A TACTIC WOULD REQUIRE HONEST TALKS BETWEEN EUROPEANS AND THE AFL-CIO, OF COURSE, HE ADDED.

4. REGARDING THE APPLICATION OF THE CGIL FOR "FORMAL TALKS" WITH ETUC, CARLSEN COMMENTED THAT HE WOULD ADVISE DANISH LO PREEIDENT THOMAS NIELSEN TO OPPOSE CONSIDERATION OF ENTIRE QUESTION OF ETUC RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNIST WEST EUROPEAN UNIONS UNTIL THE MATTER OF RELATIONS WITH THE CHRISTIANS WAS CONCLUDED, SINCE "THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED WERE THE SAME". CARLSEN MEANT PRESUMABLY THAT ONCE PRINCIPLE HAD BEEN LAID DOWN THAT WCL UNIONS MUST RENOUNCE MEMBERSHIP IN ANOTHER WORLD LABOR CONFEDERATION BEFORE AFFILIATING WITH THEETUC, AND CONSEQUENTLY FALL UNDER ICFTU UMBRELLA IN INTERNATIONAL TERMS, IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO ENFORCE RULE THAT WESTERN EUROPEAN COMMUNIST UNIONS MUST SIMILARLY RENOUNCE MEMBERSHIP IN WFTU TO JOIN ETUC.

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5. ON THE OTHER HAND, CARLSEN HAD NO OBJECTON TO JOINT DISCUSSION OF EC SOCIAL POLICY MATTERS WITH CGIL/CGT CONTACT COMMITTEE SINCE THEY WERE ALREADY REPRESENTED ON SOME OF THE RELEVANT EC COMMITTEES. CROWE

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